

individual is the basis of study" (348), but the eradication of individuality appears to be the object.

(Preventing a Prophet: The Case of Louis Riel)

This aspect of Clarke's emphasis is well illustrated by his slightly earlier analysis of the great 19th-century Metis leader, Louis Riel -- one of Clarke's earliest applications of the paradigms of dementia praecox to an individual. Clarke appears benign when he argues that Riel should never have been executed, but it is evident that, with the powers that he thought rightfully belonged to psychiatry, he would never have allowed a Riel to exist in the first place. Writing 20 years after Riel's execution, Clarke depicts him as an atavism, one that "should have been an impossibility at as late a period as 1885" (379).^{xiv} Clarke attributes his unlikely occurrence partly to the primitive character of his people, "ignorant, superstitious, and suffering from inexcusable wrongs" (379). But while they are the appropriate raw but "inflammable material" for the "fire" of Riel's "fanaticism," Clarke also attributes Riel's alleged sickness to the austerity of the region he came from, "the lonely prairies of the North-West" (Part II, 23), where cases of paranoid delusion tend to develop. Among a "well educated people," Clark assures us (II, 23) he would have been detected and confined, "shut up from society as long as he lived" (22).

In Riel's subsequent trial the rest of society, by not acknowledging what Riel is, become it themselves; only a few brave alienists, rightly finding Riel mad, "stand by their guns in the midst of a torrent of abuse." The mixed metaphors convey Clarke's own mixed feelings of being at once morally and intellectually stronger and politically out-numbered, besieged and victimized even when on the attack (and on the winning side). Ironically enough, it is an analogous position of moral superiority and physical defeat that Clarke's colleagues, and symbolically Clarke himself, offer Riel an "opportunity" to exchange for clemency and "life," provided that he recognize their jurisdiction and accept their diagnosis of himself as "mad." He criticizes Riel for refusing to be "saved" at the cost of what he himself might have been reluctant to pay.

One of Clarke's own objects is protecting his professional medical jurisdiction against the law. Riel's execution was "judicial murder" which might have been prevented had the "general public" respected alienists' opinions in